

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT MATTERS

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3, Winter 2003

A DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET PUBLICATION

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USING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT TO MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

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Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

The ultimate reason for using Performance Measurement is to improve the *quality* and *quantity* of services available within available funds. Performance measurement is primarily a management tool. However, it can also maximize resources available to the County and the programs it supports in at least two ways:

1. By measuring the effectiveness of programs, managers and the public are better able to understand what is working and what needs to be improved. Good performance measurement also yields information on how resources can be used more effectively.
2. Comprehensive documentation of services, supported by performance measurement, can also be organized into "products" that not only generate support for existing services but can be shared with other local governments on a **fee for service basis** to generate revenue.

This article focuses on the potential of performance mea-

surement to enhance revenue, including the benefits to the County, taxpayers, potential purchasers of the products, and County employees. It centers on the process used by the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) to develop and use products in a manner that benefits multiple parties in a variety of ways.

Building on a federal grant, the Prevention Unit developed a program to help at-risk adolescents improve their resilience in a variety of situations, as well as to develop leadership abilities. After this program had been designated a national model program by the federal government's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), the Prevention Unit expanded a *Girl Power!* program it had already implemented, developing a curriculum and manual to facilitate replication throughout the nation. The *Girl Power!* program is currently being considered for model program status, and is already being used by CSAP to help other jurisdictions.

Manuals have been developed for both of these programs. The manuals and a

licensing agreement are being sold to other jurisdictions and agencies that want to implement the programs. In addition, licensed organizations are also encouraged to purchase training and technical assistance to facilitate effective replication of the programs. The process is also being used by other programs in ADS that have a potential for replication elsewhere. This process is further strengthening ADS' reputation as a national leader and is enhancing its ability to qualify for additional grants and contracts.

Manuals give substance and definition to agency activities, a role that is especially important in the field of prevention, which is often poorly understood. All of these manuals include a chapter on measuring programs and activities to facilitate adaptation to local conditions as a key part of generating local support needed to sustain the programs. The process of developing manuals encourages ADS staff, as well as organizations using the products, to manage effectively. By documenting and measuring what they are doing, staff and managers are better able to spot problems at an early stage and make program improvements. Manuals also encourage program consistency across the County. Additionally, staff is encouraged to continually improve programs and practices to maximize the attractiveness of products to potential purchasers, and to facilitate training and technical assistance.

There are various benefits to this approach. They include:

Benefits to the County: ADS programs and products have been supported and funded by the Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board. Products that describe programs and outcomes using language easily understood by most citizens provides taxpayers assurance that their taxes are being used appropriately. Revenues generated through product sales, as well as training and technical assistance, support staff and activities that would otherwise have to be paid for with County funds.

Benefits to taxpayers: Manuals encourage high quality and standardized services, benefiting those who receive the services and the community at large. Manuals also provide taxpayers a better understanding of available services and facilitate efficient use of such services. Revenues generated through the sale and support of products maximize service provision.

Benefits to purchasers of products: Fairfax County has one of the most highly qualified work-forces and some of the best services available anywhere. Our recognition as one of the Best Managed Counties in the nation in 2002 reflected the quality of our workforce and services. Products we develop embody the quality of our staff and services, enabling other jurisdictions to learn from our experience. Products not only save other jurisdictions from having to "reinvent the wheel" but help them use the effort that has gone into developing proven programs to meet the needs of their own communities. The cost of our products and support are a



"Do not go where the path may lead,
go instead where there is no path
and leave a trail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Visit the PM Website on the County intranet:
<http://infoweb/DMB/pfmeasure.htm>



PM Events Through June 2003

The interagency Performance Measurement (PM) Team has planned the first half of the new year's schedule of training and brownbag lunches. A broadcast message will be sent out in advance of the events or you may contact Barbara Emerson (BEMERS) at (703) 324-3009 to register for the training. No registration is necessary for the brownbag lunches.

PM 2003 CALENDAR

| EVENT | DATE/TIME | LOCATION |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Brownbag Lunch - Using Performance Measures to Manage | February 13, 2003 Noon – 1 p.m. | Room 120C, Government Center (GC) |
| Brownbag Lunch - Public Service Recognition Week | May 8, 2003 Noon – 1 p.m. | Room 120C, Government Center (GC) |
| Basic PM Training | June 11, 2003 8:30-11:30 a.m. | CR 8, GC |
| Data Collection | June 11, 2003 1-3:30 p.m. | CR 8, GC |
| Surveying for Customer Satisfaction | June 12, 2003 8:30-11:30 a.m. | CR 7, GC |
| Managing for Results | June 12, 2003 1-3:30 p.m. | CR 7, GC |

small fraction of what it would cost other jurisdictions to develop such programs from scratch.

Benefits to County employees: Programs and products require significant effort to develop. Currently, the main rewards to County employees are being recognized by colleagues as well as enhancement of their qualifications, which can increase their attractiveness to future employers or clients for consulting efforts. Products can also make their jobs easier once the manuals are available. New employees can be more easily trained and made fully effective, and all employees and clients of an agency can better understand an agency's programs and activities. Gainsharing is another potential way of encouraging the level of employee effort it takes to develop products, with employees responsible for product development sharing a percentage of revenues resulting from the sale and support of products.

The argument that many County agencies don't lend themselves to product development fails to recognize the

quality of our agencies and their employees. Any agency can develop exemplary methods of performing their mission, and these methods can be packaged and sold. While this is a relatively new, and some would say "radical" concept for local government, it is one worth considering given the many demands for service and the resource-constrained environment we face.

[The author will gladly respond to emails, Richard.E.Eckert@fairfaxcounty.gov, or phone calls from County employees, (703) 934-8737, to discuss how you can develop products in your organization.]



"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn."

Alvin Toffler

FAIRFAX COUNTY RECOGNIZED BY ICMA FOR PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Over the past summer, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) notified Fairfax County that it was one of 17 local governments that qualified for their **Certificate of Distinction** in Performance Measurement. A plaque was presented to County Executive Anthony H. Griffin at the annual ICMA conference in Philadelphia in October 2002. In order to qualify for this level of recognition, Fairfax County had to demonstrate that it has an ongoing program of performance measurement in a number of program areas, regular training is provided, performance information is provided to the public and is used for management decisions, and that staff are held accountable for performance. In addition, Fairfax County is expected to share lessons learned with its peers, among other requirements.

Since 2000, Fairfax County has participated in ICMA's Center for Performance Measurement, benchmarking performance in 14 distinct program areas. Some of the other jurisdictions recognized for this achievement were Austin, Texas; Bellevue, Washington; Phoenix, Arizona; Prince William County, Virginia; and Santa Barbara County, California, all of which are noted as leaders in performance measurement and managing for results.

The FY 20001 Data Report from ICMA has just been received and will be provided to the County agencies that participate in this benchmarking effort.

Performance Measurement Matters is published quarterly by the PM Team. Editor: Barbara Emerson; Technical Support: Frann Shurnitski, Department of Management and Budget.